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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y ( REMOVED SENSITIVE CAPTION)

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/05/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [ZP](#) [ZR](#) [SZ](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: A/S FELTMAN AND SWISS STATE SECRETARY DISCUSS  
AMERICAN DETAINEES IN IRAN

Classified By: DCM Robert P. Jackson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: On the margins of the Forum for the Future in Marrakesh, Assistant Secretary Jeffrey Feltman and Swiss State Secretary of Foreign Affairs Michael Ambuhl discussed the status of the three Americans detained in August in Iran. Ambuhl highlighted the Swiss government's efforts to have the detainees released quickly and also gave a status report of the three's health and physical condition. Ambuhl advised the USG to set up bilateral meetings with the Iranians to address the issue. End Summary.

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Requests for Immediate Release  
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¶2. (C) Ambuhl gave a brief summary of three recent meetings with Iranian officials to discuss the three American detainees in Iran. In early October, Swiss diplomats met with the Iranian Director of American Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ali Reza Salari and subsequently met with Foreign Minister Manuchehr Mottaki and Saeed Jalili, the Iranian Nuclear Negotiator. To all they gave the same message: the three detained Americans in Iran should be released immediately as a gesture of good will. All Iranian interlocutors gave the same rhetorical response, Ambuhl reported, asking in essence: "What about the Iranians detained by the Americans?"

¶3. (C) The Swiss have also emphasized the need to resolve this situation with more bilateral talks, Ambuhl noted, but Mottaki and Jalili both initially responded they were not interested. A day after their last meeting, however, Mottaki came back to the Swiss and suggested that bilateral talks were not a bad idea. Ambuhl advised the U.S. to try and arrange a joint meeting. "We believe that there could be something there," Ambuhl stressed; the Iranians will accept a request for talks, "their message to us was clear."

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Status of Detained  
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¶4. (C) Livia Leu Agosti, the Swiss Ambassador in Tehran, recently met with the three American detainees, Shane Bauer, Sarah Shourd and Josh Fattal, and reported that they are well, Ambuhl said. They are not allowed any communication, he continued, but are not mistreated. "It is tit for tat with the Iranians," Ambuhl stressed, you give them something they give you something in return. The detainees are being fed and given access to basic needs, he added, but if the Iranians get something from the Americans they will give them a little something extra, i.e. toothpaste, conditioner, etc.

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Unfinished Thoughts on the Nuclear Front  
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¶5. (C) The meeting was cut short, but before its conclusion Ambuhl commented on developing cooperation with Iran via nuclear weapons. Why doesn't the USG go to the Iranians and have a P5 +1 meeting at the regional level and bilateral level, he recommended. At the meeting, he continued, you would agree to one general objective of peaceful cooperation. Most importantly, he concluded, you would agree on mutual respect and abstaining from unfriendly rhetoric and actions.

¶6. (U) NEA A/S Feltman has cleared this cable.

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